A Topographical and Geological Map of the Coal Measures and of the Muriatiferous and Ferruginous deposits in the Secondary Region of the Valley of the Ohio

An Early Geologic Map of West Virginia

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In the course of examining some early reports on the geology of West Virginia, the writer came upon an interesting geologic and topographic map by Dr. Samuel P. Hildreth, M.D., of Marietta, Ohio, in a paper concerning the coal and associated rocks of the Ohio Valley area.[1] The map[2] was published in 1836, and is believed to be one of the first geologic maps devoted to the West Virginia region. (An earlier map was prepared by Maclure in 1818, but it includes all of the United States.[3]) The writer had believed previously that the first geologic map of the State was that produced by Hotchkiss and Rogers in 1884.[4]

The Hildreth map is labeled with the geologic terminology of that period: Primitive Rocks (igneous and metamorphic rocks), Transition Rocks (hard limestones and "dirty" sandstones), Secondary Rocks (stratified fossiliferous rocks), which cover most of the map, and Tertiary Deposits (poorly consolidated sands, gravels and clays). Salt wells, petroleum springs, coal and various other mineral deposits are located, as well as caves and numerous mineral springs.

The "great coal deposit" outlined in the Morgantown - Clarksburg area and in the Northern Panhandle is undoubtedly the famous Pittsburgh coal seam. Coal deposits shown to the north of Point Pleasant correspond to the Pittsburgh - Pomeroy field, which was being worked to some extent at that time.

Drilling for oil was not practiced in 1836, but sites of petroleum springs along the Little Kanawha and Hughes Rivers are marked, foretelling the rise of the petroleum industry in West Virginia. Southeast of Charleston, along the Kanawha River, numerous salt wells are indicated, and the site of Washington's Burning Spring is shown and described in the text.

The Greenbrier limestones are included in the area outlined from northeast of Huntersville to southwest of Union.

It is of interest to note the spellings of towns and other geographical locations — "Kenawha", "Sewel", "Gauly", "Kingswood", for Kingwood, and "Duncards Creek" for Dunkard Creek. Present-day Logan is identified simply as "C.H." (Court House).

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1 S. P. Hildreth, "Observations on the Bituminous Coal deposits of the Valley of the Ohio, and the accompanying rock strata; with notices of the fossil Organic remains and the relics of Vegetable, Animal bodies, illustrated by a Geological map, by numerous drawings of plants and shells, and by views of interesting scenery", *Am. Jour. Science*, vol. 29, no. 1 (January, 1836) pp. 1-154. Dr. Hildreth became one of the first members of the Ohio Geological Survey, formed in 1837.

2 The author is indebted to Mr. Richard G. Hunter for photographing the map.

3 William Maclure, "Map of the United States of America, designed to illustrate the Geological Memoir of William Maclure, Esq. Observations on the Geology of the United States", *Trans. Am. Phil. Society*, New Series, vol. 1 (1818).

4 Jed Hotchkiss, *Geological Map of Virginia and West Virginia. The Geology by Professor Wm. B. Rogers, chiefly from the Virginia State Survey, "with later observations in some parts"*, (Appleton & Co., New York, 1884).